



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**DECEMBER 9, 2004**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE  
**LAWSON, PECULIAR FELONS SENTENCED  
FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARMS**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two felons were sentenced in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, for illegally possessing firearms.

\* **Mark Crawford**, 39, of Lawson, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to seven years in federal prison without parole.

On Aug. 31, 2004, **Crawford** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Crawford** admitted that he was in possession of a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun on Feb. 4, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Crawford** has a 2001 criminal felony conviction for unlawful use of a weapon and a 1988 criminal felony conviction for attempted assault.

**Crawford** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 13, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Ray County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Christopher L. Morris**, 25, of Peculiar, Mo., also known as Chris, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to two years and six months in federal prison without parole.

On Aug. 30, 2004, **Morris** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of two firearms. By pleading guilty, **Morris** admitted that he was in possession of a New England Firearms 410-

gauge shotgun and a Mossberg .22-caliber rifle on April 28, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Morris** has a 2000 criminal felony conviction for possession of a controlled substance and a 1997 criminal felony conviction for stealing a motor vehicle.

**Morris** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 13, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Raytown, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

### **Project Ceasefire**

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)